

THE  
AMERICAN  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE.**

---

MARCH, 1827.

---

POPULAR EDUCATION.

A DISCOURSE ON POPULAR EDUCATION, *delivered in the church at Princeton, the evening before the annual commencement of the College of New Jersey, September 26, 1826, by* CHARLES FENTON MERCER.

When we look abroad over the earth, what a striking difference do we find among the nations that dwell upon its surface! In one region the untamed savage roams over his arid sands with scarce a thought but how to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and secure shelter from the beasts; but little more degraded than himself. In another, the Islander of the Pacific, amidst skies the fairest, and waters the most beautiful, and groves that yield him sustenance with scarce a moment's toil, is groaning under a bloody superstition, that converts these favoured scenes into "the region of the shadow of death." In a third, the loveliest appearances of nature are enveloped in the gloom of despotism. In a fourth—but with what gratitude and joy should we turn from such prospects, to the delightful contrasts which our own land

exhibits; the best, the most free, and our readers will join with us in saying the happiest of the earth. In soil, in climate, in the abundance of all the earth's productions, what have we to desire? Look forth upon our benignant skies; upon our fields, fertile and productive; and the variety and the richness of all the good things which the plain, the garden, and the forest yield; and when we connect these with the light of civilization which has been so abundantly poured around our dwellings, we shall be ready to confess, that verily "He has not dealt so with any people."

Who that is capable of intelligently observing the present situation of this country, has not frequently rejoiced that it is not composed of segregated and distant territories; but that one vast range of fertility and freedom, constitutes the inheritance, which Providence has bestowed upon us. When we travel around the borders of our wide Republic, we are delighted to perceive that nature has begirted us with a chain of navigable

waters ; as if to intimate to those who shall control its destinies, the folly and the danger of that policy, which may have a tendency to separate what God has himself so significantly joined together. If our eye wanders into the interior, we shall find that this favoured region, is intersected at convenient distances with the noblest rivers in the world ; which uniting its most distant sections, and affording an abundant outlet for its produce, opens to the enterprize of its hardy population, a broad and boundless ocean. Is it not a subject of thankfulness also, that this one connected country, has been made the possession of one free and enlightened people.—A people speaking the same language, professing the same religion, adopting the same habits of society, preferring the same government, and who having endured the same privations, and braved the same conflicts, are looking forward to the same consummation of their political prosperity. This country and this people do really appear to have been created on purpose for each other.

But the affections of the patriot are moved with a peculiar joy, when he considers the improvement which has been made of these varied blessings. Here freedom has fixed her permanent abode ; the arts flourish ; manufactures daily increase ; commerce pours her opulence upon the waters ; and agriculture is liberally scattering her treasures over the land ; while education in a thousand ways is shedding her moral splendour around the nation's intellect, and breathing a bold republican spirit of inquiry into every order of society.

Whence this unparalleled advancement ? This dignified tone of nation-

al character ; this freedom without licentiousness ; this high spirited equality, connected with the most consistent subordination ; this susceptibility of popular excitement without the dangers of anarchy ; whence, whatever strengthens the foundations or embellishes the superstructure of that political edifice, which we have consecrated as the Temple of American Independence ?

In answering this question, the orator, whose learned and eloquent discourse is named at the beginning of this article, wisely turns away from all the *natural* advantages with which we have been encircled ; for truth exacts the concession, that they are enjoyed in superior perfection by countries less happy than our own. Some of our sister republics, in the south, for example, southern Asia, and many parts of Africa exceed us in fertility of soil ; the entire northern shore of the Mediterranean, in salubrity of climate ; Russia and Great Britain, her foreign possessions being estimated, in extent of territory ; and England alone in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation. No, it is to the diffusion of intelligence that we are indebted for our happiness. A subject which calls from Mr. Mercer, one of the finest bursts of eloquence that we remember to have read since the commencement of our editorial labours. We cannot withhold it from our readers. It is an apostrophe to

#### KNOWLEDGE.

I am humbled and abashed, in thy presence, thou daughter of divinity ! For, whether thou smilest on the patient labour of the solitary student, as he trims his midnight lamp to read thy lessons ; or leadest him abroad, at early dawn, to gaze upon the charms of



awakened nature, how lovely art thou, thyself, and how glorious thy dominion! The wilderness blossoms, and the solitary place rejoices at thy presence. The traveller threads, by thy inspiration, the mazes of the gloomy forest, and discovers verdant isles and refreshing fountains, amidst the waste of the lonely desert. Thou conductest the intrepid navigator in the twilight of departed day, with vivid hope, along fields of floating ice, and the doubtful shores of unknown continents. The mountains bow their stupendous summits to thy footsteps, and earth and ocean yield to thy search, their caverned treasures. Having explored for man "this vast globe and all that it" contains, thou lendest to him celestial wings, to visit other worlds. Sustained by thee, he traverses immensity, descries new suns and planets on the remotest verge of space, and tracing the yellow haired comet's eccentric path, through centuries of time, fixes the moment of his approach, and welcomes his return.

The times in which we live are characterized by the diffusion, rather than the accumulation of knowledge. In Europe the feudal institutions of society are gradually wearing away beneath the attrition of commercial intercourse; or consuming amidst that blaze of light which the press is pouring even upon the humblest ranks of life. In our own country, the necessities of the nation peculiarly call for this process of dispersion. This, is a government of opinion. Upon the virtue and intelligence of the people, every thing that is dear and valuable depends. This is the broad and deep foundation on which our political stability reposes; and with this the prosperity of religion has been inseparably connected.

With whom does the sovereignty of this nation reside? The people—and is it not desirable that sovereignty should be powerful? But know-

ledge is power. Is it not important that sovereignty should be wise? And wisdom is only knowledge judiciously applied. Surely then if any thing can excite the sympathy of all classes in such a country as America at present is, it must be the diffusion of intelligence. If there be a work in which all heads, all hands, and all hearts, may cordially and congenially unite, this, throughout the boundless varieties of improvement in which it can be accomplished, must be that work. Knowledge is important to the constituent, that he may be able judiciously to select, and having selected, perhaps in some cases to instruct his representative. It is important to the representative, that he may wisely administer that power and preside over those interests, of which his fellow citizens have made him the fiduciary. If then this affluence of the mind be of such incalculable value, both to the rulers and the ruled, are they not bound by the relations which they reciprocally hold, and the responsibilities which have been respectively devolved upon them to unite in systematic efforts for its unlimited dispersion?

There is another argument in favour of such a policy, to which Mr. Mercer appears to attach considerable weight. As it is a little out of the range of ordinary thinking, we would prefer giving it in his own language. The following extracts will perhaps be sufficient to bring it before our readers. It is connected with the

#### INFLUENCE OF COMMERCE UPON SOCIETY.

If, in the improvement of the moral sense of mankind, as in the inventions of art, and the discoveries of science,

all nations, however slightly connected or widely separated, have a common interest, how deep, may I not repeat, is that solicitude, which the people of these states should cherish for the diligent culture and diffusion of useful knowledge! What interest can be imagined, superior to that of the American people in the preservation and glory of their union, involved, as they are, in the wisdom of its laws, and the purity, energy, and fidelity of their administration; all of which, again, rest on their own intelligence and public virtue.

But if the natural progress of society and manners, in every commercial nation, be attentively regarded, this interest will be awfully augmented.

The multiplication and diversity of human pursuits, combined with that division of labour, to which the arts and sciences are indebted for their improvement, have a direct tendency to occasion between the various classes, into which society as it advances in age is gradually distributed, not only a great disparity of leisure and knowledge, but a more dangerous inequality of wealth and comfort. Nor have positive institutions, without doing violence to human nature, hitherto succeeded any where, in long retarding this progress. It has been in some cases unintentionally accelerated, especially in modern times, by commercial jealousy, and the unnatural pursuit of an ideal an unattainable national independence. Even the agrarian systems of the Jewish, Spartan, and Roman commonwealths, yielded, at length, to the force of this tendency of society; and the feudal tenures, which arose upon the ruins of the ancient world, and were, so long, guarded by the chivalry of modern Europe, have fallen, or are daily sinking, under its overwhelming influence. . . . .

But that spirit of commerce which splits up estates by alienation, has, for its correlative, the spirit of gain which reunites, enlarges, and improves them. The progressive power of wealth surpasses even that of population; and the extemporary growth of both, favoured by the division of labour, and the extension of foreign and domestic commerce, oc-

casions an inequality, both of property and knowledge, as apparent, and ultimately as fatal to the internal peace and prosperity of a nation, as any that the most ingenious and vicious legislation could possibly ordain. In its issue it exhibits society under the aspect of two opposite and appalling extremes. For while, at the one, man is beheld advancing daily in wealth and luxurious enjoyment, at the other, he is seen descending, with accelerated steps, to poverty, want, and misery.

The dispossessed landed proprietors, the recent bankrupts in commercial speculation, and their numerous dependants, mingle with another class of persons, who begin, as this revolution commences, to appear, and, as it advances, multiply with increasing rapidity. They are the common artificers and labourers, who are sustained by capital.

As the disparity of wealth to numbers increases in the compound ratio of its own artificial accumulation, and of the progress of population, their joint operation tends very speedily to throw the physical strength and poverty, with the majority of the community, on the one side of society, and all its wealth, collected in the hands of a small minority, on the other; without erecting any adequate barrier to guard these natural foes from collision, if the one were not dependant on the other for subsistence.

That this fatal issue of a course of events, which if left to find its own corrective is obviously inevitable, may not, even while I speak, be threatening the social order of that very people, the blood of whose ancestors beats in the veins of so many of my auditors, and so many of whose institutions we have copied, and are still copying, I most fervently pray.

While in this step of my inquiry I seek to illustrate the extent and moral effect of that inequality of wealth and knowledge, to which the commercial systems of Europe and America both necessarily lead, I cannot deny to my purpose the force of an authority the most conclusive, however painful may be the exposition of national calamity.



We do not remember ever to have been more deeply impressed with the importance of those public measures which are designed to scatter intelligence abroad amongst our people, than by the following picture. It is boldly sketched, but as we firmly believe, true to the original. We should rejoice to see it in the possession of every legislator in America. While it is calculated to warm the spirit, and to invigorate the efforts of all who are engaged in the great work of instruction, from the humble sunday school teacher, to the loftiest and most learned professor of philosophy; it is peculiarly adapted to strengthen and extend that excitement in favour of literary enterprize, which already prevails in a considerable extent in our senates and legislative chambers; and to which we owe the choicest blessings of our country. The picture to which we allude reveals to us the present

#### SITUATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The commercial and military marine of this nation; the extent of her armed and unarmed population; her manufactures, her accumulated capital, both fixed and moveable; her fleets, her colonies, and her revenue, constitute an array of power, the most imposing. Its concentration upon a single island, happily situated, and not exceeding in dimensions the territorial extent of the largest of those twenty-four states composing, at present, the American union, augments, in a multiplied ratio, the promptitude and energy of the action of this vast power, on the residue of mankind. If she has not the undisputed sway of Rome, in the zenith of her glory, it is only because the rest of the world is unlike the barbarous or effeminate nations, whom Rome subdued.

If, therefore, an unparalleled accumulation of riches and power in all

the forms most attracting to ordinary ambition, were a just standard of national happiness, the people of Great Britain, and especially of England, who govern the residue of this mighty empire, would be the most blessed on earth. Their present lot does indeed present the most splendid exhibition that the world has ever witnessed of the triumph of commerce in amassing *wealth*, but at the same time it is the most alarming evidence of the possible inequality of *its* distribution, and of the consequent prevalence of want, ignorance, vice, and misery.

There were returned to the British parliament in 1824, for England and Wales but 120,000 qualified jurors out of a population which exceeded twelve and a half millions. Of the funded public debt due from the twenty-one millions of people inhabiting Great Britain and Ireland, amounting to seven hundred and thirty-seven, out of eight hundred and thirty-eight millions of pounds sterling, or to 3,275 millions of dollars, 280,000 persons are entitled to the whole, and consequently to the annually accruing interest upon it, of one hundred and fifteen and a half millions of dollars. These classes are not composed of distinct persons, since the fundholder is often a freeholder too, and they together own the far greater proportion, not only of the unfunded debt of nearly 450 millions more, but of all the moveable property of the nation. Behold in these particulars, therefore, a part of the evidences of the overgrown wealth of the rich.

Of the number and indigence of the poor, sum up the melancholy testimony, that, at the period of the last British census, the occupants of three-fourths of all the inhabited houses in England and Wales, were unable to contribute to direct taxation:—that for a series of years, more than two-fifths of all the families who dwell in those habitations, amounting to five millions of people, were dependant for permanent or occasional relief upon the constrained charity of the residue:—that in some counties the relieved paupers comprised three-fourths of the entire population, and

of the whole number of paupers provided for, more than ninety thousand families were actually in work-houses.

In the eight years next preceding this census, the committals for crime among this population mounted up from six thousand five hundred and seventy-five, to thirteen thousand one hundred and fifteen, or very nearly doubled; and in 1823, or two years after that census, the total county levy for the maintenance of jails, and houses of correction, approached in amount near a million of dollars.

From the prevalence of pauperism and crime in a country, in which, of an annual expenditure of near three hundred millions of dollars, not one cent is bestowed on public education; the state of knowledge among the great body of the community might be confidently inferred, if a yet more remarkable fact was not supplied in the extent and application of the only legal provision for the poor themselves. In addition to the preceding national expenditure, for a series of many years, an average annual sum amounting to near twenty-six millions of dollars, has been levied in the several counties of England and Wales, for the clothing and subsistence of their indigent poor, while of this fund no part whatever has been bestowed upon their instruction. During this period the annual average of all the charitable donations from every other source to this object, has not much exceeded three hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

It is not, therefore, at all surprising that the number of uneducated children in England and Wales, between the ages of five and fifteen years, computing those of the relieved poor, exceeds eleven hundred and fifty thousand, while the total number cannot fall far short of two millions. These, but for untimely deaths from accident, famine, and disease, or the fatal penalty of a bloody code of laws, would arrive at manhood untaught, and might die of age without reproof or consolation from the perusal of the oracles of God, which so much is annually expended by the same people, and so usefully too, in translating into foreign languages, and publishing to

heathen lands. Amidst this scene of pauperism, ignorance, and crime, but in the absence of foreign war, or of scarcity from ungenerous seasons, in the plenitude of commercial prosperity, and after a great reduction of those taxes hitherto charged on the necessities of life, spectacles are at this moment presented in England of human calamity more awful than the pestilence which walks unseen by day, and usually sparing the country, smites only towns and cities with death and mourning. Having filled South Britain with distress and alarm, they have extended their awful visitation, though in less threatening forms, to hardy, laborious, and frugal Scotland.

In the period of a single life, the expense of pauperism in England has risen to a tenfold proportion, while the numbers of the people have but doubled. Although in the last twelve years, that population has continued greatly to increase in numbers, its longevity has diminished: and of those commodities, the use of which denotes the absolute or comparative comfort of the consumer, the annual consumption has remained stationary, advanced but little, or sensibly declined.

I will not long pause to demonstrate how very imperfect, as this morbid condition of society might lead us to expect, is that public sentiment in England, which, however powerful in itself, every where supplies at best but a feeble substitute for the restraints of religion and law. Passing in silence its limited control over the morals and manners of society, the little influence which an enlightened public conscience exerts, should I not rather say, the open corruption which its absence warrants, among the people themselves in the choice of the only responsible branch of their parliament—to say nothing of the salutary check which it withholds from that body of hereditary nobles who compose another branch of the same legislature, and from the irresponsible monarch on the throne—is too forcibly illustrated by the conduct of the late elections in that splendid, but unhappy kingdom, to escape wholly unregarded in this inquiry.



In the manly admonition of one of those country gentlemen of England, in whose retired dwellings British liberty will maintain its last firm hold:—"If political reform be attempted in this country, it should begin with the electors rather than the elected; extend to the people, as well as to their representatives."

Returning from this survey of the condition of a people to whom no American can ever look with indifference; but from whom we are too prone, perhaps, to expect pertinent examples for our imitation, I am solemnly impressed with the conviction, that, in the very soil from which springs *our* national felicity, there are already sown the seeds of future misery; and that they will not only vegetate, but arrive at fatal maturity, unless we check their growth in the germ of their existence.

We have borrowed from our great original, not only the language that we speak, the arts we practice, the fashions we imitate, the learning we cherish, and the greater part of the philosophy we delight to study; but, with these we have imbibed the same preference of commercial to all other pursuits; the same love of riches, and with a rapidity which astonishes ourselves, we are fast overtaking our instructors in wealth and luxury. Poverty will soon follow in the train of these acquirements; and may not vice, misery, and crime, fill up the rear? Labour will, it must become in time, and that time is not far remote, the lot of the far greater part of every American community. It must often be associated with poverty and indigence. Let us, therefore, inquire, if it be not practicable to combine so much knowledge with all the necessary employments of labour, as to check, if not to arrest this fatal progress of society?

To what extent the combination of intellectual and moral improvement with laborious occupation may be carried, without relaxing the main spring of commercial activity, the desire of gain, is a problem, in the solution of which is involved, I solemnly believe, the future happiness of our republics. \* \* \* \* \*

If with the expenditure of six and

twenty millions of dollars on the mere food and clothing of her poor, England has hitherto bestowed nothing upon their education in childhood, but the pitiful sum which private charity has voluntarily contributed, her laws are indeed to blame, not for what she has profusely given, so much as for what she has cruelly withheld: not for what she has done for her poor, but for what she has, through a misapplication of her wealth, utterly neglected to do. If her enormous debt had been contracted, in whole or in part, for the purpose of disseminating useful knowledge among her people, the burthen would not have been heavier, than that which this debt now imposes on the industry that pays its annual interest: and that interest might, still I neither mean that it would nor that it ought, to have gone into the same pockets that now receive it. If her appropriation to this beneficent purpose had been begun a century ago, in the infancy of that debt, and when her poor rates did not exceed one-twelfth of their present amount, it is more than probable nay—indeed, certain, if the experience of Scotland be trusted, where the parish school has laboured under the influence of a much sterner climate and less generous soil—that not only her paupers, but her criminals, would never have approached their present number.

At the cost of education in the *society* schools of Connecticut, a moiety of her existing poor rates would provide for the education of all the youth of the united kingdoms.

After having contemplated such an exhibition as this, with what delight will the patriot's eye turn to an opposite picture; which the genius of the orator has so graphically delineated in his

#### DESCRIPTION OF NEW ENGLAND.

Travel with me to the east, and behold them on the land and on the ocean.—We have already surveyed their well cultured fields.—Enter, with me, their comfortable and tasteful dwellings;—see what neatness and order every where pervades

them. Behold those intelligent children, each of whom, if old enough to have passed through the neighbouring school, can cheer the family circle, by reading, in turn, some amusing or instructive volume from the village library when the rain pours down too heavy for uncovered labour, or winter has suspended for awhile its operations. The father and his oldest sons feel an interest in the public welfare, of which the village newspaper, that circulates through every house, bears ample testimony. Converse with him, or wait but a moment—for knowledge is inquisitive—and he will himself address you. You will find that he knows, thoroughly, the history of his state, and country; and will astonish you, if from any part of Europe, or from certain portions of America, by his intimate acquaintance, also, with the public character of every man, who has been, or is distinguished in their service.

Is he a farmer? Talk with him on agriculture, and he will at once unfold to you his own system of cultivation; and should it differ from his neighbours, as it well may do—for knowledge is inventive—he is capable of explaining very readily his motives for every departure that he has made from long established usage.

Is he a mechanic? He will enable you to perceive that he is acquainted with the progress of his art:—How rude it once was, and how it has, by gradual accretions, grown up to be mysterious, to those, even, who practise it, without a knowledge of its principles. Is this, do you think, superfluous knowledge? Go to the patent office, at Washington, and you will there perceive that four-fifths of the useful inventions, for which America is so famed, have here sprung up. Not such only as the natural productions of the adjacent soil required, in order to fit them for the inventor's use, but such as relieve the labour of distant climates from its heaviest burthen.

Is it extraordinary that these useful inventions should centre in the east? Who invents labour-saving machines? The man who labours. Who improves the arts? He who practises them, and perceives and suffers from their

imperfections. Quicken his intellect by cultivation; teach him how to think; augment his stores of thought and powers of combination; spread the history of his art before him, and he will choose expedients for himself to practise. He will derive them sometimes, perhaps, from the suggestions of accident, as Newton did the principle of gravitation; sometimes by reason, from analogy, for all the arts are sisters, and the sciences, who follow them into being, and are but their children, become, in turn, by age, their teachers and their guides; as Homer sung from nature, before Aristotle taught the knowledge of his enchanting art.

What I tell you is history; and if other nations cannot comprehend its truth, it is not wonderful. They knew not of the institutions of which it speaks. Even the common sailor, who puts to sea from the north, is an intelligent moral agent, having the impress of his country's freedom stamped upon his heart, by her liberal instruction. He goes abroad in youth, from choice; and expects, before he quits for ever his favourite element, to own some share, at least, of a vessel, as good as that in which he sails. And why not? Thousands have done so before him. He has but to practise what he learned from the wholesome discipline and instruction of the village school, worth, of itself, more than all the wealth which it enables him to acquire. Since it has taught him obedience and self-command; subjected him, in early life, to a fixed order and economy of time, and to constant restraint: repressed all his bad propensities—while it cherished and expanded all the good; and, above all, added to their influence the support, and sanction, and consolations of religion.

After discussing the importance of popular instruction, the orator passes into the investigation of what has been done for this object. The schools of England and Scotland; those of Prussia, the Normal schools of Austria, the primary schools of France, and the systems which have been adopted in different parts of



America, here come under his review. He concludes with some judicious observations on what remains to be accomplished. We regret that our limits will not permit us to follow him through these divisions of his discourse. They may perhaps constitute the subject of a future notice. We cordially recommend them to all who are, and all who are not interested in the important subjects of which they treat. In the latter case, they can scarcely fail to awaken an emotion, which should at all times animate the bosom of every American citizen;—solicitude for the intellectual improvement of our country.

We shall spare our readers all unnecessary remarks upon the faults of this very creditable performance. Faults, however, it certainly has. If we were required to name one, we should say its inordinate length. What portion of this volume of ninety pages was actually delivered, we are not informed. But as it was "parting day," which admonished the orator to come to a conclusion; and as this was done with emotions which he had "scarcely the voice to utter," we may fairly infer that in this respect he awarded full justice to the occasion. The gift of continuance, appears to be the characteristic talent of our country; but it is seldom that the quality and the quantity, are (as in this case) made responsive to each other.

We could wish of Mr. Mercer's style, bold, and sometimes beautiful as it is, that it were a little less expansive; and there is an artificial exactness, a sort of prudery about it, which is not at all calculated to make a favourable impression. The habit of dilation also is not only discoverable

in his composition, but in the discussion of his subject. There are too many collateral circumstances introduced. His notice, for example, of the objections which might possibly be brought against the liberal and enlightened views which he has so ably advocated, reminds one of a traveller, who should stop to throw stones at the dogs that bark at him from the way side; when if he were to jog quietly along, they would soon cease their clamour, and do him no harm whatever.

There is one deficiency in this production, which, coming as it does more immediately within our province as Editor of this Magazine, we cannot, with the pen still lingering in our hands, forbear to mention. We do not see why it should not be spoken as freely as it was thought. Indeed we may as well say at once, that the omission is in our opinion such, as in this country, to render any "Discourse on Popular Education," exceedingly incomplete. Certainly we should not have expected to discover it in an oration pronounced before such an audience, on such an occasion, and by such a man.

When a christian orator stands before an assembly like that convened at Princeton; composed of the members of two such institutions as those which ought to constitute the pride of New Jersey, as they certainly do constitute a blessing to our common country; when we find him selecting for his noble theme, the efforts which are making for the improvement of the human mind, and enlarging with an enthusiasm worthy of such a cause, upon the importance of those efforts; when in the prosecution of his subject he is seen, ransacking with indefatigable research the statute

books of different states, and exploring minutely their municipal regulations; when, as his eye wanders over the vast range which society stretches out around him, it seems to notice even the humblest indication of literary advancement, the village school, the library, the newspaper,—whatever can lend wings to knowledge, or scatter intelligence throughout the land; and when in the midst of all this the thought presents itself, that within an afternoon's ride of the spot on which he stands, there has been located the central establishment of a great national institution, whose object is popular instruction; belonging to no party, subservient to no sect, commanding the approbation of the wise and good in every section of America; how are we to account for the fact, that under such circumstances, such an institution receives no share of his discussion?

This noble association is destined to present (be blind to them who may) the brightest exhibitions which in this country the philanthropist has ever been permitted to contemplate. At the last anniversary, there were in connexion with it 400 auxiliaries, 2131 schools, 19,298 teachers, and 135,074 pupils. The moral influence which it causes to descend, like the dew of heaven, upon every habitation that is brought within its reach, may be estimated by the fact, that within the last year, 1000 of its members are reported by the different auxiliaries, as having become hopefully pious,—making a total of four thousand, since the commencement of these united labours. “But we have reason to believe (say the managers,) that the reports of your auxiliaries

embrace not more than one half of those who have become christians since their connexion with your schools.” If this society, now in the third year of its existence, continues to advance as it has done, it will in five years from the present time, accomplish more for America, than all our other literary institutions put together. Let its friends only be faithful to themselves, and to the great enterprize in which they are engaged. Let no opportunity be lost of pressing it upon the notice of our countrymen. Unwearied by exertion, undismayed by difficulty, in private and in public, from the pulpit and the press, again and again, let us bring it before the nation. The desired impression must finally be made. The whole force of public sentiment will be ultimately enlisted in such a cause. And this, with the blessing of heaven, is all that can be desired in such a country as our own. But let us never suppose that our work is done, while any thing remains to be accomplished. The sabbath school system is not complete in the United States, until three millions of children are refreshed by its benignant influences.

---

For the American Sunday School Magazine.

#### SABBATH SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

MR. EDITOR.—It will seem useless to many to say a word in favour of these libraries. Successful experiment has fully tested their utility. Yet there are some who doubt, and say that experiments have, in many instances failed of success. Indeed I have noticed one or two failures myself, and the object of this communication, is to state what I deem to be the reason of the failure. In those cases, *the books were not at all adapted to the capacities of children.* They



were collected by a committee of the school, who went to most of the families in the village, and received such volumes as each family chose to give;—a volume of sermons—a dissertation of some topic of theology moral philosophy, &c. &c. Among a library thus collected, of a hundred volumes, you will scarcely find ten calculated to excite the attention of the scholars. I believe this neglect of a judicious selection the principal reason of the indifference of the juvenile readers. I have never known a library composed of books published by the American Union, fail to interest both the scholars and the families to which they belong.

A VISITER.

JOHN FREEMAN.

*Mr. Editor:*—I saw in your last paper, an interesting account of the character and death of John James Freeman, a pupil of one of our sabbath schools. I have been informed, that the subject of death had occupied his mind for some weeks previous to his illness. On Christmas day, he walked into the burying ground, and there spent some time, to impress this subject on his mind. On his return home, his mind appeared remarkably solemn. When a discourse was preached to the children, on new year's day, he was present, and was much affected. He afterwards mentioned, with tears and anxiety, some anecdotes which were told on this occasion. As death approached, his mind was tranquil; and he said to his teachers, "God makes me so patient." To another person he said, "I have no desire to live." We have reason to believe, that his end was peace, and his immortality, blessedness. Shortly after his decease, a girl who is a pupil of the same school, composed the following lines, in reference to his death.

"His spirit then, has ta'en its flight—  
We trust to realms of pure delight:  
He's gone to dwell with God above,  
To sing the song, redeeming love!

And is it so, that James has gone!  
Why was he called away so soon?  
It is the Lord, and surely he  
Knows what is better, far, than we.

Far from this world of sin and strife—  
The troubles of this mortal life:  
His little spirit soared away,  
To sing God's praise in endless day."

*Christian Advocate.*

Our readers may perhaps remember, that in giving the report of the Galilean Society of this city, we expressed a hope that we should be able to record, at a future time, an account of some of the spiritual blessings which afford their encouragement to school No. 2, of this efficient association. We are glad to redeem the pledge which this intimation was intended to imply. Sometimes amidst the tame monotony of ordinary life, occurrences transpire, which are strange and beautiful as fiction, and yet true. This is strikingly illustrated in the following

#### NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

Soon after the school under the care of the Female Sunday School Association, connected with the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia was formed, a little girl, who lived in the outskirts of the city, and who attended this school, was awakened to a deep and serious concern of mind, and began to instruct, and exhort, and pray with the children of her acquaintance, near the place where she dwelt, and to invite them to the Sunday school. Some account of this interesting female has been already published in the Sunday School Gleanings. Among the children whom she persuaded to go to the sabbath school, were two little girls, who were soon distinguished for their docility and attention. They were sisters, one about ten and the other twelve years of age, daughters of a poor German widow woman, who supported herself and them by her own industry. When requested to send her children to the sabbath school, she seemed very averse to the proposal, saying, that she did not wish them to learn the English language. Upon some persuasion, however, she finally consented. They made very rapid proficiency in the first

rudiments, and soon discovered an unusual seriousness and attention of mind, and their teachers had the satisfaction to see their labours richly compensated, and to find them making advances in the knowledge of gospel truth, and resting their hopes of salvation upon the Rock of Ages. They gave the most convincing evidence of a change of heart and decision of character. Their walk and conversation was consistent and exemplary. As soon as they had been brought to taste the sweets of redeeming love, their hearts were deeply affected with the spiritual state of their mother—she was growing old, and her mind was dark and ignorant, and averse to every thing calculated to awaken her to a sense of her sin and danger.

The children were very anxious on her account, and various expedients were resorted to, in order to bring her to a knowledge of the truth. Tracts were given to the children to read to her; and certain passages of scripture carefully selected for them to recite in her hearing; all accompanied with the prayers and humble entreaties of these little apostles of truth. Sometimes she would get angry and bid them desist: and long did they labour with her in these humble means. The Lord was pleased to hear their prayers, and blessed their exertions, for the salvation of their mother; she became deeply anxious, and began to accompany them to the sabbath school, and to their little places of social prayer, and became desirous of having a prayer meeting opened in her own house; which was done. She was finally brought to sit at the feet of Jesus, and attributed her conversion to the instrumentality on her children. When conversing with a person on the state of her mind, she exclaimed in her German accent, 'who would have thought it, Mr. ———, that my dear children would have gone down to that little school, and brought these things home to their poor old wicked mother?'

These young females were early admitted as communicants in one of our churches, and in due season their mother also, and continued to grow in grace as they grew in years.

After two or three years, circum-

stances made it expedient that they should remove into the country, about fifty miles from the city, where they had some relatives and friends. The children were at first very unwilling to go: they could not abide the thoughts of giving up their school, and social meetings, and going among strangers, where they had neither sabbath schools, nor any regular worship. Upon consultation with their friends, they were told that the providence of God seemed to point that way, and to have provided this place as an asylum for them, and that perhaps he had something for them to do there; that they must try to enlighten the poor ignorant children and tell them what God had done for them.

They soon after removed to that region, and began to look about to see what they could do, but found every thing to dishearten and discourage them. They could find no serious young persons of either sex who would engage with them in establishing a sabbath school, nor would any of the inhabitants support or patronise them.

They determined, however, to undertake the work themselves, relying upon the blessing of God. A friend supplied them with a few tracts and books, and encouraged them to persevere. They procured a small school house, and collected thirty or forty children, organized them into a sabbath school, and proceeded to instruct them in the same manner they had been taught themselves. At first they met with many difficulties; some of the spectators, even the adults, often disturbed them in their devotions, and ridiculed their endeavours to instruct those little wanderers. They were obliged to labour alone for some time, amidst many discouragements and difficulties. God was pleased, however, to turn the hearts of the opposers, and incline several young females and young men to join them, and by patient continuance in their efforts, the school began to flourish, and soon assumed an encouraging and decided appearance.

As soon as the school was settled, they went into another neighbourhood about five miles off, and undertook another, attending to one in the morning, and the other in the after-



noon; so that they soon had two flourishing schools, containing sixty or seventy scholars each—the inhabitants in other districts around, hearing and seeing the success and benefits of these schools, and moved by emulation, immediately set about establishing sunday schools in their respective places, upon the same plan: so that there were eight more sabbath schools in this quarter of the country, growing out of the first two.

How wonderful are the ways of divine grace! these two children, who were growing up in ignorance and corruption, and might have been abandoned in wickedness and pests to society, were plucked as little brands from the burning—were awakened and instructed by means of sunday schools, were instrumental in the conversion of their mother, and afterwards of raising ten flourishing schools in a portion of the country where they had never before been known. And how many souls may hereafter people the kingdom of Heaven in consequence of these labours, will be known to us only in that day when God maketh up his jewels. These young females are still living, and as much engaged in the cause of Christ as ever. They still continue to adorn their profession, and to walk in all the ways of holy obedience; and the church to which they belong has never had any reason to regret their early admission, nor that its members were among the earliest patrons of sunday schools.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SECRETARY'S CORRESPONDENCE.

*Clear Spring, Jan. 11, 1827.*

This school now contains upwards of 100 scholars, 28 out of which number are in the testament or first class, and six more about to be promoted. Last sunday, being the first sunday in January, we had a public examination of the sunday school scholars, and intend to do so quarterly. It proved very interesting to the spectators; a number of them came forward and proffered us their assistance, who (when the school was first started) were indifferent as regards its prosperity. We

held a collection and met with tolerable encouragement, and anticipate greater at an ensuing examination.

Our concert meeting begins to command the attention of the inhabitants, and hope that it may have the desired effect.

There are eleven teachers who have engaged in teaching, besides the officers of the society, including one of the managers—six of the officers and teachers are professors of religion, beside the three who made their first professions on our last meeting.

*Presbyterian Sunday School,  
Fayetteville, Jan. 13, 1827.*

Along with this order for books, we have thought it advisable, though it be not at the usual time, to send you a very brief account of our school. There are two others in this place, besides our own. The Episcopalians and Methodists have each a school. For the control of ours, there is a sabbath school society, which has its annual meeting at the time of our annual examination of the pupils. The number of teachers male and female, is about fifteen. The number of pupils *enrolled* is one hundred and forty, and the number who attend, fluctuates from sixty to a hundred.

Among those who have frequented our school as teachers and scholars, there are a goodly number who have recently united themselves with the church of Jesus Christ. Some of these have the greatest cause to bless God for the establishment of the noble institution of sabbath schools. These instances afford us very great inducement to perpetuate our efforts and to redouble them, if, peradventure, we may be happily instrumental in saving some few precious and undying spirits. We know that our work is a good one—that its happy fruits are abundant—that the Head of the church has smiled upon it—and we feel assured that he will continue to smile upon it. O! for the arrival of that illustrious and happy era, when one shall have no cause to teach another—but all shall be taught of the Spirit of the Great God!

Springfield, Mass.

Feb. 14, 1827.

Being one of the superintendents of our school, which contains between three and four hundred children and about fifty-two teachers, I have undertaken to compose a series of lectures on the duties and qualifications of teachers, and the best modes of teaching. The first was read last evening at our monthly concert of prayer, and our teachers seemed very deeply interested, and ready to hear whatever could be said for their guidance and instruction. It has seemed to me that more ought to be done to give teachers just views of their duty, and of the means of performing it. It is true, there are "the Teacher's Guide," and "Lloyd's Manual;" but they do not, either of them, bring the matter home like personal interviews and conversations. We pay more attention to a sermon we *hear* from the pulpit, than to one we are *reading* from a book; and we pay more attention to the *words* of a person *talking* with us, than to the words of a *preacher*. The situation of teachers in different places and societies; and the different character and wants of the various schools in which they are engaged, seem to render it important that the instructions they receive, as to their duty, should be more directly adapted to the peculiarity of their circumstances. I hope, under the blessing of God, to be useful to our teachers in the way I have mentioned. My prospect now is very encouraging.

#### PRISON SCHOOLS.

Having an occasion to spend a sabbath in Auburn a short time since, I called in the morning at the state prison, to visit the sunday school, and truly, dear brother, I was pleasantly surprised. For I, like most others, had looked on its inmates as a hopeless part of the human family, shut out from all the privileges of civilized society, and abandoned to every vice, and therefore to be given up for lost. It is on this principle that even civilized nations have always acted, till of late, towards convicts in prison. But I am truly glad

to see that some are beginning to feel that christians owe, even to the vilest of our species, at least, one important duty. That is to teach them the truth of God.

In the chapel, where they assemble every sabbath to hear a sermon, I found about one hundred with their teachers, and I never witnessed an instance in a sunday school, where the scholars evinced a greater interest. I could hardly see a wandering eye. Every soul appeared eagerly pursuing some important object.

The gentleman who accompanied me, told me that the convicts generally, were glad to have the opportunity of attending. That it was understood that those who had the privilege, should conduct themselves well; if not, they would be debarred it; and that it had a salutary effect on the discipline of the prison.

I could say to myself, do they come here to learn that there is a Saviour? They may do it, I can say, dear brother, go on in your exertions to promote sunday schools. Let them extend to the farthest abode of man.

Yours truly, L. S.

REMARKS.—The above is from the correspondence of an Editor whose useful paper is devoted to the sunday school cause. May it not afford matter of reflection to those who have opportunities for similar benevolence in this city and elsewhere? Ought there not to be a sabbath school connected with every prison in the United States? We know that something is doing in this way, but is there enough done? Have our exertions filled up the measure of our capacity? Have we done what we could? At first view one would suppose that this unfortunate and degraded class of beings, would be averse to the restraints connected with such instruction. But facts are otherwise. Here is a prison in which the privilege of attending school on sunday, is eagerly sought after by the convicts, and



made to have a salutary influence upon their conduct during the rest of the week.

Such testimonies as the following, from our brethren of different denominations, ought certainly to encourage us, and breathe new vigour into the efforts which we are making, for religion and our country.

#### AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

We learn, that the American Sunday School Union has recently made some very advantageous arrangements, for the accommodation and convenience of their depository, &c. by the purchase of a lot and buildings in Chesnut street. Any thing which serves to increase the funds, and thus to extend the usefulness of this society should be matter of rejoicing and thanksgiving, especially to every one who bears the responsible relation of parent. The facilities for training up a child in the way he should go, furnished by this society, are beyond all price or estimate. We wish to add our testimony, to the excellent influence of the Union's publications, in elevating the affections, and awaking a deep and glowing interest, concerning those things, which cannot too early be implanted in the infant heart. No parent, especially in the city of Philadelphia, can *pass* by this fountain of health and blessing, guiltless of the charge of neglecting in a great degree, the best interests of his children. Here are the means

"To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,  
To breathe the enlivening spirit—and to fix  
The generous purpose in the glowing breast."

*Philadelphian.*

For the American Sunday School Magazine.

#### EARLY PIETY.

*At what age can a person become a true christian?*

This is a subject, which has produced considerable agitation in the American churches. A difference of opinion prevails. Several hundred

children in our sabbath schools have professed their faith in the Lord Jesus. They are received as christians; as those who have been born again. Hundreds of teachers are now praying, that the children in their classes may be converted to the same faith. On the other hand, many who stand high in the church of Christ, look upon these conversions as the result of mere sympathetic enthusiasm. The subject demands attention; because if the former are wrong, and are praying for things that the scriptures will not sanction, it is time their zeal should be checked, or turned into a proper channel. If the latter are wrong, it is time they were convinced of their error, that they may no longer hinder souls from coming to Christ.

In the days of our Saviour's abode upon earth, prejudices existed against bringing children to Christ, but he said "suffer them to come and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." It is a fact that children have often been brought to the knowledge of the truth, at an early age, who through all the fascinating scenes of youth, and perplexing cares of manhood have given the most unequivocal evidence of having been born again.

The following anecdote may illustrate this truth.

The Rev. Joseph Wolf, the missionary, one of the most extraordinary characters of the age, was the son of a Jewish Rabbi, in Germany.—When eight years old, he was led in the providence of God, to the house of a poor barber. The barber and his wife were honest christians and talked with the boy on the subject of religion, and told him about Jesus Christ, the true Messiah. The mind of the little Hebrew became much awakened; and after meditating seriously for two days, he went to the protestant clergyman of the village, and said to him, "I will become a christian." The prudent minister asked him, "How old are you?" He answered, "eight years." The minister replied, "*you are too young; return to me after a few years.*" Thus this convinced, inquiring child, was pushed back into the darkness

of Jewish unbelief. In that darkness, he spent four or five years more of his life, imbibing the inveterate prejudices of his forefathers, and influenced by their infidelity, to practices of sin. Often, however, as he informs us, did convictions trouble his soul, until the age of thirteen, when he met with a pious Roman Catholic priest, who talked with him about a future state, read the gospel with him, and told him it was impossible to be a moral man without God, without *Christ*. The faithful effort was blessed, the boy became a christian. The persecution of his relatives compelled him to flee from them; and since that time, through a great variety of circumstances, he has shone as a burning light in the church of God. At this time, he has only reached the age of thirty-one, yet his christian zeal is known among all the Jews and Mahomedans of the east; and his praise in the churches over the whole earth.

What an example is this of early conversion! It was not sympathy that led him to seek the Lord Jesus; nor was it enthusiasm that filled his soul with a burning desire to preach the gospel to others, when he had felt its blessed truths himself. It was the Spirit of God that awakened him. The Lord had chosen him to preach, both to Jew and Gentile; and the same Lord has caused the learned and the honourable of different nations to tremble at his exhortations, as Felix trembled under the preaching of Paul. The good which he has accomplished, as an ambassador of Christ, cannot be computed; the judgment of the great day will reveal it.

Among the dear children of our sabbath schools, there are probably many chosen labourers whom the Lord designs for his vineyard.—Let those who are teachers beware how they keep them back from the light of the truth. Rather, let prayer ascend to God, on high, that he would renew, sanctify, and send forth from our schools, multitudes, who shall preach Christ to a lost world.

VIATOR.

#### SABBATH SCHOOL AT HOME.

A superintendent of one of the sabbath schools in Boston, gives the following very interesting account of one of his scholars, who died shortly afterwards.

One of our scholars, an interesting little boy of about seven years of age, was taken sick a few weeks since; and is now apparently very near his last great change. His father is one of our teachers, and a brother and sister are pupils in our school. The Holy Spirit seems evidently to have exerted his influences on the heart of this little boy. One sabbath, a short time previous to his present sickness, he and his brother and sister were detained at home by a storm. He expressed his regret that he was unable to attend his school, but after musing awhile, he said to his mother, "Mother, we can have sabbath school at home." He was asked how they should proceed in conducting *his* sabbath school, and in reply he mentioned to his mother that sabbath school was opened with reading the scriptures and prayer. His mother then asked him who could open his school—he replied, "I can do it, mother;" and having read a portion of scripture, he knelt down with his mother and little brother and sister, and in a very appropriate manner addressed his petition to him, who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Once, when left alone with his infant brother, he was found by its bedside on his knees, offering up his petition, on its behalf. On two or three other occasions also he expressed a wish to unite in prayer with his mother, and with fervency and propriety engaged in this solemn service. Nor were his prayers the mere repetition of forms which he had committed to memory; but they were the desires of his soul expressed in language of his own selection. One petition may be mentioned as an example of the correctness of his views, as well as the aptness and originality of his language; it was, that God "would make his father's house a house of *happy redemption*." Time forbids the introduction of other circumstances, which might be mention-



ed, indicative of a work of grace commenced in his young heart—a belief in the existence of which affords his parents great consolation in the prospect of soon parting with this interesting object of their tender affection.

#### MR. ALDEN'S REPORT.

We invite the attention of our readers to the following report of the Rev. Timothy Alden, one of the most active agents of this society. It is scarcely possible to peruse such a document, without catching something of the spirit by which it is pervaded. May such a spirit be extended until it warms the bosom of every professing Christian, and causes the whole earth to feel its renovating power.

#### *Meadville, Pennsylvania.*

My dear Sir.—Having fulfilled, I hope satisfactorily, the duties of my last appointment to an agency under the American Sunday School Union, I do myself the pleasure to forward the following statement.

In the numerous excursions I have made, during the past year, in reference to the sabbath school object, I have travelled many hundred miles, preached some scores of times, and addressed our fellow mortals as often, on the nature, design, and beneficial effects, temporal and spiritual, of sabbath school instruction. In all my peregrinations, I have been cordially received, and the importance of such instruction has been almost invariably acknowledged. Two of my circuits were through the principal parts of Warren County, making about 350 miles. The most of my other excursions were confined to Crawford County. My time, as opportunity offered, has been devoted more to visiting and addressing sabbath schools, heretofore formed, (some of which were suspended, more were become languid in exertion, and all were too lukewarm for an object of such incalculable moment,) than to

the establishing of new institutions. In all cases, I trust that I have been instrumental, even with my feeble talents, in giving a new impulse to these interesting little seminaries. A uniformity of constitution, recently and extensively adopted, promises a happy result.

During the eight years, in which no small portion of my leisure has been employed in establishing and encouraging sabbath schools in this back-woods region, I have never failed in forming one of these institutions, in any settlement, where I have had opportunity to unfold the advantages proceeding from them; and, at the same time, have had the means, which were furnished me by the hand of Christian benevolence, in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, to tender Bibles, Testaments, and tracts, to a reasonable amount, as a stimulus to the youthful mind; yet, I have to lament, as I presume all your agents have, that unless people, parents and children, have line upon line and precept upon precept, on the subject, although a sabbath school may be instituted, and flourish for a season,—carelessness and indifference, after a while, not unfrequently, ensue, till little besides the name remains. Hence the necessity of reiterated addresses on the blessings of the sabbath school system, mingled with faithful suggestions on the solemn account which must be given by parents and others, who neglect to exert themselves in promoting the welfare of this system, so happily designed, in Providence, for the greatest possible good of the present and future generations.

#### NEW SCHOOLS.

Since my last annual report, I have formed but five new sabbath schools, within the limits of this union; four of which are in Crawford County, and one in Warren County. Another has also been instituted, principally by the instrumentality of your worthy agent, Mr. W. so that the whole number of sabbath schools, which have at any time belonged to the Crawford County Sunday School Union, is 83. Thirteen of these have been released, as heretofore stated,

to form constituent parts of the Mercer County and Venango County Unions. In Crawford County, there are 54 sabbath schools, the residue is in Warren and other counties.

In September, I devoted one week to forming new sabbath schools, and to reviving some which were become nearly, or quite extinct, in aid of the Venango County Sunday School Union. To facilitate my operations, it was announced in a newspaper, that a clergyman with one of the managers of the Venango County Sunday School Union, would visit the principal places in the county, specifying, that on such a day, at nine o'clock, these agents would be at a certain place; at one o'clock, at another; and at candle-light, at another; and on the next day, in like manner, at three other places, and so on, day after day, to the end of the tour. The object was particularly mentioned in the advertisement, and all, feeling any interest in the sabbath school enterprise, were invited to attend promptly at the times and places of appointment. Andrew Bowman, Esq. President of Venango County Sunday School Union, was my fellow traveller in the excursion, and we were sometimes joined by others, who accompanied us from place to place. I generally preached to the assemblies which were convened on these occasions, and always addressed them with some degree of fulness, on the leading subject of convocation, offering many exhortations to parents to aid in promoting the sabbath school interest—to children and adults, to honour themselves, their friends, and the good cause, by improving all their leisure moments, from day to day, in preparing for the appropriate exercises of the sabbath school—and to teachers, perseveringly, zealously, and prayerfully, to perform their part, as co-workers with God in training young immortals to a knowledge and a love of the truth, as it is in Jesus. The incessant toils of this sabbath school missionary excursion, in which I travelled 120 miles, were lightened during two days, by the brotherly assistance of the Rev. Thomas Anderson, recently ordained by the Presbytery of Erie.

I found the advantages of a publication in a newspaper (after the manner of the Rev. Mr. Frey) of the times and places of meeting, so great, for expediting the business of my agency, that, in a number of instances, I have had recourse to a similar plan for this county; making numerous appointments in a newspaper, and fulfilling them, as in Venango County, with the desired effect. This plan of notification has saved me much precious time, as in no other way could I have given information, so opportunely, of my multitudinous visitations.

#### RESULTS.

A retrospective view of the past and of former years, induces the hope, that my time, devoted, to a considerable extent, to the sabbath school moral and religious instruction of an extensive, new, populous, and destitute region, has not been altogether in vain.

Many have been taught to read the word of God, who, from the want of common schools, would, otherwise, probably, never have had the opportunity to learn,—and of these some were advanced to the meridian of life. A vast amount of the holy Scriptures has been impressed on the minds of nearly three thousand children and adults, who but for the sabbath school system, would have known, in not a few instances, little of the contents of the Bible. In some portions of our moral waste, where, formerly, the sabbath was spent, by parents and children, in rambling about the fields and woods, or in some other unhallowed pursuits; the happy change, as a fruit of the sabbath school labour, is a pregnant subject of grateful animadversion. Family government, in numerous cases, is become less irksome, from the same cause, as many parents have repeatedly declared. Whenever a preacher selects for his text a portion of Scripture, which has been committed to memory by a goodly number of children and adults of the congregation, he is presently struck with their uncommon attention: so



true it is, that they understand better, in such case, and, of course, profit more by the instructions of the public teacher in consequence of their memoriter acquirements. With a particular reference to the rising hopes of the church in our new settlements, I sometimes give, instead of a formal sermon, a comment upon some chapter which has been well committed to memory, after which, as opportunity admits, I question the sabbath school learners present on various parts of the same, in presence of the congregation; and you would be delighted, could you witness their prompt and pertinent answers. The tracts, distributed with a liberal hand according to the attainments made, are known, in some instances, to have been the means, under the influence of divine grace, of conviction and hopeful conversion, within the bounds of this Union. Many poor families have been furnished with a Bible or a New Testament, in reward of the sabbath school industry of children, and this where such a treasure was peculiarly needed. The aggregate of blessings, as the result, under Providence, of our sabbath school operations in this region can never be known till the arrival of that day, when all things shall be unfolded before the assembled universe. Yet, in several different places we have witnessed, as hertofore reported, the smiles of the Holy Spirit on our humble institutions, in calling teachers and learners to a view of their perishing condition by nature, to a broken hearted penitence; and at length to that hope, which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. Last year, I reported that there was a special attention to religion in sundry sections of this union, the good effects of which still remain to the glory of divine grace. The interesting case of Eliza H. Bowman, is well known to the readers of the *American Sunday School Magazine*; other youths, the fruit of those awakenings, are rejoicing in hope and adorning that profession, of which, sabbath school instruction was employed by the Head of the church as the leading cause. No special attention to the one thing needful, characterizes

any of our sabbath schools at present; yet there is evidently an increased disposition to attend to the means of grace, particularly in those woodland divisions of this region, which ten years ago were uncultivated and unsubdued. On the sabbath, our places of worship in such new settlements are full and overflowing, which may be an indication that a special blessing is in store. During the past year, however, some who have been distinguished as teachers and learners in our little establishments, have made a public profession of religion, and, as there is reason to believe, have commenced the everlasting song.

#### EXTRAORDINARY DILIGENCE.

It is worthy of remark, that the sabbath school system discovers and brings to light, in the most obscure corners and in the bosom of our wilderness, some, whose genius, if duly cultivated, promises much for the benefit of the world. It is grateful to notice the zeal which has been manifested in years past, by the youths of this too much neglected region, to participate in the advantages of sabbath school instruction. A lad, about twelve years of age, travelled through the woods ten miles, to recite his lesson, until a sabbath school was instituted in his vicinity. The same youth has made a profession of religion, and is exerting himself for such an education, as shall qualify him to become a preacher of the gospel. In one of our schools, two adults, a male and female, whose sight was so imperfect as to forbid the expectation of ever learning to read, by the benevolent aid of their little brothers and sisters, committed to memory and recited, in one season, more than five hundred verses. At another establishment, a female, about eighteen years of age, a cripple from childhood, unable to walk, was a striking example of sabbath school industry; in treasuring up chapter after chapter from the Bible, till she had obtained two shares in the Union Library. In acknowledgment of her meritorious diligence and perseverance, in addition to her fine collection of

reward books, she was presented with a copy of Watts' Psalms and Hymns. In three months after, she had learned and repeated, memoriter, the whole, psalms and hymns, with great precision. In several instances children have recited the whole of the New Testament in course of a year.

#### COMMITTING SCRIPTURE.

I have occasionally noticed remarks in the periodicals of the day, calculated to discourage the committing to memory so much of the Scriptures. I am always sorry to see such things, because, in my opinion, it is impossible to have too much of the sacred volume impressed upon the mind. Children, with proper management, may be induced to learn to a great amount, memoriter, before their judgment is sufficiently mature, to profit much by the higher appropriate and important exercises of a well regulated sabbath school. Whatever is well learned in early life, is seldom forgotten. No preacher of the gospel, and no Christian of adult age, ever regretted the time spent in childhood, to render the word of God as familiar as the alphabet. The old divines were distinguished textuaries. Many of our young sabbath school learners are treading in their steps. Should any of them become preachers of the gospel, it will be of immense advantage; and if they should not, they will have the privilege of understanding much better, what they may often hear from the pulpit. Let our children be encouraged to deposit as much as possible of the Bible in the great store-house of the mind; but let no teacher fail to do his part in explaining the lessons learned, and in enforcing by such arguments as may be suitable to the capacity of his class every duty implied, till every member shall become a well instructed, though youthful scribe. In this way much may be done towards preparing the world for that happy period, fast approaching, when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest.

Your fellow labourer in the gospel vineyard,

TIMOTHY ALDEN.

#### THE MOTHER'S CHARGE.

The agency of maternal influence, in the culture of the affections, those springs which put in motion the human machine, has been long conceded. That it might also bear directly upon the development of intellect, and the growth of the sterner virtues of manhood, is proved by the obligations of the great Bacon to his studious mother, and the acknowledged indebtedness of Washington, to the decision, almost Lacedemonian culture of his maternal guide.

"When I was a little child," said a good man, "my mother used to bid me kneel beside her, and place her hand upon my head, while she prayed. Ere I was old enough to know her worth, she died, and I was left too much to my own guidance. Like others, I was inclined to evil passions, but often felt myself checked, and as it were, drawn back, by a soft hand upon my head.

"When a young man, I travelled in foreign lands, and was exposed to many temptations. But when I would have yielded, that *same hand was upon my head*, and I was saved. I seemed to feel its pressure, as in the days of my happy infancy, and sometimes there came with it a voice, in my heart, a voice that must be obeyed—'Oh! do not this wickedness, my son, nor sin against thy God.'"

#### ACTIVE EXERTION.

The letter which we have republished below is to the editor of a northern paper.

MR. PUTNAM.—Sir, I wish through the medium of your paper, to inform the benevolent persons, in various places, who last winter entrusted me with books and money, to purchase books for the institution and encouragement of sabbath schools in the vicinity of Winnipissiogee Lake,—that I succeeded in procuring enough for twenty-five such schools, which I instituted by appointing a superintending committee to each school, and furnishing them with written regulations, a school paper, and reward



books—about twenty-five to a school:—that I have lately been over the ground, and found the result to be as follows, viz. nineteen of said schools, containing rising of 400 scholars, went into operation; which scholars, besides reading a lesson in the Bible at each meeting of the school, recited from memory 73,000 verses, principally from the Bible. Most of these schools were where there had been none before. The people, after becoming acquainted with their beneficial tendency, were generally pleased with them, and probably will, in many places continue them without foreign aid. The other six schools failed, principally for want of energy, and suitable teachers. With the books which I devoted to these six schools, and a few others in addition, I have now laid a foundation for ten libraries, and for as many different sabbath schools, on the same missionary field, with good prospects of great usefulness to both parents and children.

Yours, respectfully,  
EZEKIEL RICH, *Missionary.*

For the American Sunday School Magazine.

#### JUVENILE LITERATURE.

ELNATHAN,

A Narrative, illustrative of the manners of the ancient Israelites, American Sunday School Union, 1826. Price 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents.

The object next in importance to the oral instruction which a Sunday school teacher gives his pupils, is the reading with which he may supply them. His first and manifest duty is to instil into their minds, with the rudiments of education, the *plain* and *essential truths* of christianity. The bible or testament is put into their hands, and this, as it contains the foundation of the teacher's hope, so it must stand in the estimation of the pupil as the Book of books; the most true, the most instructive, the most engaging of all books; as the very word of God; holding a place pre-eminent, and possessing an excellence incomparable. The teacher

feels that he has armed his pupil with new powers; he has given him new desires; and in short, has raised him from ignorance to knowledge. The pupil will on his part exert these powers; he will gratify these new desires; he will read and he will think. Little as those children who have learned to read may appear to the eye of the unobservant, to value or to exercise their faculties, it is a pleasure to children to read, where learning has not been made a painful task. Where the complaint is made, "that child will not read," it will be found that the child is compelled to apply its mind more than is proper at its tender age; or the more general cause will appear in the want of suitable books. The food which is given is as little suited to the digestive powers as to the appetite; and is it to be wondered at, that what you offer is loathed and rejected? We are little disposed to favour that system of education, which by obviating all hardships, appears to place the learner at once in possession of the desired knowledge; there is nothing more futile, however captivating the scheme may be. It is only by exercise that the mind is strengthened; and it is but poorly fitted for energy and action, when trained by these short-hand methods.

Our present object, however, is a different one from that of training the human mind for high attainments. The Sunday school teacher having taught the art of reading, has more to do with the heart than the intellect of his pupil. He is more anxious to teach him truth, than science, to store his mind with those facts and principles which will be a guide to him as a moral being, and serve to direct him in a course of virtue and piety, than to give him worldly wisdom.

The pupil when prepared to indulge his mind in the pleasures of reading, is an object of interest to those who have laboured to qualify him for this enjoyment. He is ready now to be corrupted with the vicious books which the depravity and avarice of mankind have strewed so abundantly over the world, and which have been made so alluring to youth.

The teacher must stand in the way, and furnish him with books of a proper character. He has armed him with dangerous power, unless properly directed; and it is a matter of no small interest whether this faculty is a means of corruption or refinement. This topic we can only touch upon in the present case, and it is with pleasure that we refer to the interesting pages of the *Journal of Education*, a monthly Magazine, devoted especially to this important subject.

The Sunday school teacher, however, wants for the object of his charge, works engaging and instructive, and written in a plain easy style. It has been the chief business of the American Sunday School Union to provide this essential material for Christian education; the want of which has been so long and so greatly lamented.

These remarks bring us to the notice of the work whose title stands at the head of this article, and none could with more propriety lead us into such a train of reflections. *Elnathan*, as its title designates, is a narrative, illustrative of the manners of the ancient Israelites. The story is an account of the travels of the old man Elnathan. Its object is to present a living picture of Jewish manners, including every thing relating to their habits, arts, religion, and customs, so far as they are handed down to us at this distant day.

To give an idea of the character of the work, we will introduce the reader to the venerable Elnathan, in the author's language.

"During the reign of this wicked king, (Ahab) on a serene and lovely evening in the month Ijar, after the sun had just set, an old man, an Ephraimite, whose name was Elnathan, having returned from his labour in the fields, came out to the door of a house which stood on the west side of the hill of Samaria, and began to employ himself in plaiting a basket with the leaves of the palm-tree.

"The dress and appearance of this old man were peculiarly simple and interesting. Over a shirt of wool he wore a close-bodied frock, tunic, or

'coat,' as it is named in the New Testament, having sleeves, and reaching down to his feet. It was made of coloured linen; and round the border of it was the woollen fringe and ribbon of blue enjoined by the law, that he might look upon them, and remember all the commandments of Jehovah, to do them. On his feet he had sandals, or soles of strong leather, which were bound on with latchets; but his legs were bare, their only defence from the weather being the long loose garments which he wore. On his head, which was now bald with age, he wore no covering, but only a narrow fillet bound round his temples, to keep his hair from being troublesome; and his few remaining locks, and his long beard, were white as the blossom of the almond tree."

The old man is driven away from his farm by an idolatrous kinsman, who was owner of the estate,—sets off for Jerusalem with his little granddaughter, whom he leaves on the way with a kind widow, who generously offers them a home, begging that Elnathan would live with her as a father—he agrees to do so, and proceeds to offer his sacrifices to the Lord, which enables the author to give a minute account of the temple services, and of the splendid and imposing ritual of this ancient church, in which he makes proper reference to the great type of all their costly ceremonies. The following passage introduces this interesting subject.

"So he went onward, and ascended Mount Moriah, and drew near to the eastern gate of the outer court of the Temple, called the King's Gate, which was framed of wood, and overlaid with plates of brass. The wall of the court, which was partly of wood, and partly of stone, was on this side supported upon a great terrace, raised up with huge stones from the deep valley of Kedron below, in order to enlarge the space on the top of the hill, and make it equal to the plan which Solomon intended. And when the sun began to rise, the gates of the Lord's House were opened by the porters, to the sound of silver trumpets; and Elnathan en-



tered into the outer court, or court of the people, along with the multitude who had come from the city to worship. He advanced toward the steps of the east gate of the inner court of the Temple, called the higher gate of the Lord's House. And, looking through this gate, he saw before him the lofty and magnificent porch of the House of God, or Sanctuary, one hundred and twenty cubits high, built of beautiful white stones, which had been hewn in the neighbouring mountains."

A short stay at Jerusalem, during which, Elnathan attended a formal wedding, admits a lively sketch of the manners of the people, their houses, family arrangements, and all the details of local and ancient customs, with a representation of the splendid ceremonies of an Eastern marriage; a short extract from which will further show the design of the work.

"And having reached the house of Nathaniah, the father of the bridegroom, they entered the court, and ascended the stair which led from it to the gallery. The door, which led to the chamber where the marriage-feast was to be celebrated, was only half-opened, and one stood there to see that none entered but those who were invited. Elnathan was admitted through this 'strait gate' with the friends of the bride; and passed with them, along a narrow passage, into a chamber where a number of wedding garments were hung up that had been prepared by the bridegroom, that each of the guests might put on one; and if any had neglected to do so, it would have been esteemed a great dishonour. Elnathan having put on one of those garments, entered with the rest into the chamber where the banquet was prepared; for it was not an uncommon thing, in those days, for the rich to admit the poor to their table when they gave an entertainment. And, as among the ancient Israelites, the women were not permitted to associate with the men at their feasts, the bride with her maidens, and female kindred, retired to her own apartments, where a supper was prepared for

them by themselves; and where it was required of the bride, that she should remain in silence, fixed to the spot where she had been seated."

The return of our old traveller brings to the notice of the reader, the agriculture of that age, together with an account of a funeral, and at last he is restored to his grand-daughter, and with lively gratitude to God takes up his abode with the widow.

This work contains 136 pages, and there is perhaps not a paragraph in the whole which does not convey even to the well informed reader, valuable instruction; every line almost, is made the vehicle of direct intelligence; and the very frequent introduction of pictures illustrative of ancient manners, gives life and interest to the whole.

Elnathan is written after the manner of that learned production, "the Travels of Anacharsis;" and although the reader is not embarrassed with references for every line, yet the minute examination of some of our most learned antiquaries, gives us full assurance of its authenticity, and of the accuracy of the work in all its descriptions.

The story which is made the medium of instruction, is simple in its character; and while it has incident enough to make it engaging, is not so highly painted by fancy as to divert the mind from its main object, which is to present such a picture of the customs of the ancient Israelites, as will gratify curiosity in respect to this most interesting of all the nations of the earth, and tend to illustrate those portions of scripture which refer to the social habits and character of the people among whom the revelation of God's will was first made.

---

HARRIET AND HER COUSIN; OR PREJUDICE OVERCOME.

We have been presented with a neat little volume, bearing the above title, lately published by Messrs. Whipple and Lawrence, of Salem, Mass. It is the first American from the fourth Edinburgh edition. It is a work peculiarly interesting to young

ladies, and may be read with perfect safety by them; for it does not describe love scenes, except in one or two cases, where hearts, cold and unfruitful by reason of sin, were operated upon by the Spirit of God, and filled with love unspeakable. The conversion of Harriet, who had always enjoyed the prayers, entreaties and privileges of her pious parents, has some remarkable features. It has every mark of a true work of God, and yet, from a foolish habit which she had of concealing her private feelings from her parents, the change in her mind was kept in concealment for some time. At length her pious and amiable father discovers that his daughter is "born again," and the delight which fills his bosom and that of her mother, is beautifully described. The story then presents the lovely Harriet as making swift advances in grace, now that she has confessed Jesus before men, and has taken up her cross.

The remainder of the narrative discovers Harriet in a very trying situation. She is sent to Edinburgh to see a grandfather, who had long disowned his son, her father, because he was a "Methodist," and sought the honour that cometh from God more than the praise of men. The wealthy grandfather, and a cousin, whom Harriet found at his house, found that their deep rooted prejudices against religion, had no foundation in truth; before Harriet's amiable and christian deportment, these long cherished errors fell, and she was made the happy instrument of restoring her father to his proper place in her grandfather's esteem, and of imparting new views to the mind of Julia, her cousin.—*Z. Her.*

There are perhaps, few publications of this class, which are better calculated to remove those prejudices against vital piety, which too often prevail in the higher orders of society, than the one mentioned in the above judicious notice. Its tendency is to convince all those who read it, that personal, heart-felt religion, instead of being destructive of happi-

ness, is the only source of real consolation.

#### MAINE SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

The annual meeting of this society, says the Christian Mirror, was holden in the vestry of the second church in this town, on the evening of the 4th instant. The report of the managers, read by the corresponding secretary, was an able document, and to us intensely interesting. It contains several suggestions and recommendations of measures for the promotion of sabbath schools. The officers of the last year were re-elected. Gov. Parris is the President. Rev. Thomas B. Ripley, Recording Secretary, and Mr. Wm. Cutter, Corresponding Secretary.

#### VERMONT.

The Rev. J. Hopkins, of New Haven, Vt. writes to the editor of the Vermont Chronicle, that no attempt had been made till now, to keep the sabbath schools of that town open in winter, on account of the supposed inconvenience. This winter a young gentleman of uncommon experience in such labours, offered to devote himself to the work, expressing a confident assurance that the thing was practicable, and that they were even more useful in the winter than the summer, because of long evenings and the want of amusements abroad. Others of a kindred spirit joined him. The minister believed, that the suspension of the schools taught children that religious instruction is of trifling importance. The result of the attempt is, that *they have by far the most flourishing and promising schools that have ever existed in the town.* They comprise a pleasing number of youth, from 15 to 30 years of age, some of whom are married persons. They have two schools which they design to continue through the winter, and in one of them they may see in the worst of travelling, and in the most inclement weather, from 100 to 120 scholars.

Mr. H. says, that sabbath schools do not prevent parental instruction at home, as has been supposed. Nothing



has ever been attempted among his people, which has operated so effectually to excite parents to this duty. The superintendent generally gives out a question or two, to be answered from different parts of the Bible, the next sabbath. "The effect is, parents are constantly accosted by language like this, 'Pa, wont you show me some passages to prove my question?' In this way parents are looking up texts and explaining them to their children to show—the duty of children to their parents—the consequences of lying—the consequences of drunkenness—our obligation to observe the sabbath—the immediate duty of impenitent sinners," &c. &c.

The Chronicle also says: "We have been told of a school in another of our towns, which the teachers were *compelled*, almost, to continue through the winter, by the urgent solicitations of the children. Their little charges would by no means consent to its suspension. It is not too early in the season to bring the subject forward. Before the usual season of commencing summer schools, societies should be organized and libraries obtained—every necessary preparation should be made for placing the school on a good and permanent foundation. This cannot be done in a day—and if deferred till May or June, it will probably not be done at all."—*Rec. & Tel.*

## FITCHBURG.

The school at this place, in the parish of the Rev. R. A. Putnam, has presented a very pleasing report of its recent progress. Such a comparison as it exhibits between the results of the last year, and those of the year before, is certainly encouraging and instructive.

	1825.	1826.
Superintendents,		5
Male Teachers,		10
Female Teachers,		16
Teachers who have made a profession during the year,		11
Male Scholars,	66	65

VOL. IV.—M

	1825.	1826.
Female Scholars,	92	93
Whole number of scholars,	158	158
Average attendance thro' the season,	85	91
Whole number of lessons,	1828	2002
Perfect lessons,	761	1034
Imperfect,	729	711
Indifferent,	332	225
Bad,	34	32
Discredit marks,	3	0
Credit marks for punctual attendance and good behaviour,		4004
Contributed by the scholars,	\$11,30	\$12,17

To the latter some young ladies added \$2,42; one half of which has been devoted to the enlargement of the sabbath school library, the other to the education of heathen children.

"By this means," say the managers, "a habit of thinking and feeling in behalf of others—a *habit* of doing good—of *giving* (which is more blessed than to receive) for the extension of the blessings which they enjoy to those who have them not, will be created within them, and "grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength." We look on this part of our system as of vast importance and of powerful influence on the hearts of our children; and we hope by it to raise up from among them some Brainerd or Mills, or some Harriet Newell, who may, for the high purpose of glorifying God, and saving souls, eventually leave their dearest home and kindred, to range the forest, or plough the deep, or cross the desert, or climb the mountain—to bring the wild savage, or the hardened sailor, or the poor Hottentot, or the shivering Greenlander to the feet of Jesus, and the hopes of immortal life and blessedness. Let a spirit of benevolence be cherished in our children—let them *early* learn to do good with *property*—with *money*; and we may then hope that the *love of money* will not be in them the *root of all evil* and death to their souls.

"But besides the salutary and kindly influence which these acts of *giv-*

ing will have on their own hearts and the formation of their moral characters, an immense amount of real good may be accomplished for the benefit of others. The stream from one school would indeed be small; but let a stream come from every school and unite; and there would be a river."

The report goes on to demonstrate a fact to which we would invite the particular attention of all who are engaged in this noble work. They show satisfactorily that the schools in connexion with the American Union, might contribute at least \$6,000 for similar purposes, if each school should produce the same amount that this has done.

In this calculation they take it for granted, that one half of the schools can do nothing beyond their own support; and that one fourth of them contain a smaller number of scholars than their own.

We admire enterprise of this description, and would respectfully direct the notice of teachers and superintendents, to the laudable example which is here presented. It is by small contributions such as these that the revenue of christian benevolence is to be extended.

---

**ALBANY COUNTY SABBATH SCHOOL  
UNION SOCIETY.**

There are now under the care of this society eighteen schools, containing, by the best estimates, 1762 children, and taught by 193 teachers, exclusive of officers, making an increase since the last year of about six schools, sixty-three teachers, and 742 scholars; but about 250 of these scholars are from places without the city of Albany.

The following extracts from the late Report of this enterprising society, will give some idea of the spirit with which they enter into their work.

"We see, then, in sunday schools, the foundation laid of a vast change in the moral and religious condition of mankind.

If the schools could be made universal, men would become, in a religious sense, a different race of beings. It is in large towns that vice most prevails; but in large towns sunday schools may be made most effectual. There the children may be most easily collected at all seasons. They may be established in quarters where there are no churches. The returning children bring home a tract, or a Bible report, or a hymn, which the other members of a family must hear: the children become bearers of the message of solemn warning and admonition, grace and truth; vice is checked in many; some are made to know the truth as it is in Jesus. Hence new strength is added to our body, and the child that would have been an instrument of satan, becomes a soldier of the cross, and perhaps a preacher of the righteousness that is by faith on the Son of God.

This mild, kind, and unostentatious labour in the cause of the Redeemer, is performed, we hope, in the spirit which he exhibited. It is a scene which, though little regarded by human eyes, may be viewed with approbation by the angels and the spirits of the blessed. We ask, then, is it possible that such labours will be left to struggle with the additional difficulty of a want of funds for the little expenses of the schools. Will a city abounding in wealth suffer its sunday schools to languish for want of books and room rent? from the profusion of luxury is there nothing to spare for the luxury of doing good? or will not those who enjoy this world's abundant riches, give a pittance to confer on others those riches which make no man poor, and which never decay. In suggestions for the future, we beg leave to urge



the completion of the census of children. We hope to know the condition of every child in this city; and to have none untaught whom by any means whatever, we can "persuade to come in." We would urge our Christian brethren to set the example that no house should be left with children unknown or uncalled for.

#### SCHOOL BOOKS.

The occasion gives the opportunity first to hint at a more universal improvement in the economy of school books; at present there is a great waste of books by putting an entire spelling book into the hands of almost any child. A small child, who only needs an alphabet, wears out an entire book containing spellings and lessons. Those who read in the latter have no need of the alphabet. It is obvious that a child should use no more than the particular pages he is learning; there is then no waste. We hope the National Union will early turn its attention to the formation of a general series of lessons printed on separate sheets and put on pasteboard, sufficient to supply all the schools in the United States. The same economy would dictate a more universal use of portions of Scripture printed separately for lessons, instead of entire Bibles. We have now only to add, that in pursuance of former intimations, efforts are making to extend the system of sunday schools throughout the county of Albany."

#### JOHNSTOWN UNION.

"The Johnstown Union Sunday School Society," was organized about the middle of October, and a vote passed that it should propose itself as auxiliary to the "Albany County Sabbath School Union." The school has commenced with flattering prospects, and now contains about 120 scholars and 20 teachers. Thirty or 40 of the scholars are from 12 to 15 years of age; these, and indeed the whole school, attend with punctuality, and manifest a zeal for improvement, which gives hope that a blessing from heaven will attend their efforts.

They have yet given "limited

scripture lessons, and have endeavoured not so much to store the memory with words, as the mind with ideas, and with a sense of the goodness and presence of God, and the obligation of all his creatures to love and serve him."

#### KNOX SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

The first sunday school ever established in the town of Knox, was established in May, 1823. This school continued until fall, and was then closed for the winter. In 1824, an effort was made to extend sunday schools in the town, and four others were established in as many school districts. In 1825, an additional school was established, making the whole number six, and an union of all the schools was constituted, called the Knox Sunday School Union. Its object was to form a monthly sunday school concert for prayer; to hear monthly reports from the various schools, and to attend to such other business as might be deemed beneficial to sunday schools. At each meeting an address is delivered by a person previously appointed for that purpose.

At present (1826) the Union has under its care, 157 scholars and 19 teachers. The recitations are mostly of scripture, and the number of verses for each recitation is limited. No one recites more than twenty. The teachers make such remarks upon the verses recited, and ask such questions as they think proper. They have a visiting committee.—They also have a sunday school library, and from the commencement of its existence have received the American Sunday School Magazine.

#### CRAWFORD CO. S. S. UNION.

The fourth anniversary was held on the 3d of January, 1827. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, more than two hundred people assembled, who manifested an interest in the exercises of the occasion, honorary to their character, and gratifying to the friends of sabbath school instruction. One of the attendants was a venerable mother in Israel, ninety-five years of age, still active and intelligent, who formerly

had strong prejudices against these institutions, but who, from a recent more full understanding of their nature, design, and happy effects, now declares her unqualified approbation of their excellence and importance, and expressed her high gratification at the performances of the anniversary.

After prayer, and singing one of the sabbath school hymns, between twenty and thirty pupils stood up, and Christ's sermon on the mount was repeated, memoriter, a single verse by each one, in rotation, till the three chapters, comprising the sermon, were ended. Many questions were then proposed to the same pupils from the Rev. Dr. McDowell's book of scripture questions. The recitation and answers were with a promptitude and correctness seldom surpassed.

The patron of the Union made an address, giving an account of the present state of the eighty-two sabbath schools in the Union—of the handsome donations made to the library, since the last anniversary, certificates of forty-six rights to the use of which have been granted, according to the rule adopted—of the various advantages resulting from the operation of these little seminaries of gospel science, in this part of the country, mingled with reflections, and closed with an exhortation to the managers of the Union, and to the parents and teachers of the learners, to persevere in their united efforts for the moral and religious benefit of the rising generation—in a labour, in which the brightest seraph that glows and burns in the presence of God, would delight to participate.

#### PITTSBURGH S. S. UNION.

This very interesting society is now in complete operation; and from the experience, liberality, intelligence, and harmony of the board of managers, we have every reason to hope, with the divine blessing, it will become a most able auxiliary to the American Sunday School Union, and to the cause of piety and expanded christian philanthropy generally. The society's depository of sabbath school books is now open, and furnishes

many valuable and indispensable books for sabbath schools, on cheap and accommodating terms. It is expected, that the assortment and variety, by next spring, will be much larger, and the society be able to supply Western sabbath schools generally.

*The Improved Class Book for Sabbath School Minutes*, published by the Pittsburgh Sabbath School Union, is now before me; and I must confess, as a specimen of improvement, and as an auxiliary to every well regulated sabbath school, and to every intelligent and zealous teacher, it is an invaluable acquisition, and from its low price (6½ cents each, 75 per dozen) it cannot fail to find its way into every sabbath school, and into the hands of every teacher. As an humble member of the sabbath schools, I must acknowledge myself much gratified with those specimens of this new society's publications that have come under my observation. The constitution, by-laws, and address, lately published, and which can be obtained by any friend of sabbath schools, gratis, on calling at the store of Mrs. Kerwin, the agent, in Market street, evidences enlarged and liberal christian views and feelings, and has discarded (I hope for ever) any thing like sectarian views or feelings. This I consider one of the happiest traits in the character of this benevolent institution; and I would say to the officers and teachers, be of good cheer: God will bless your labours: never become weary of well doing.

A TEACHER.

*Pitts. Rec.*

#### BALTIMORE.

It is with pleasure that we copy into our pages a portion of the Tenth Annual Report of the Asbury Sunday School Society.

The Managers of the Asbury Sunday School Society, submit the tenth annual report of their operations, with gratitude to the Dispenser of all good, for the superintending providence which has continued to supply their wants, and to bestow a blessing on their labours. At no period, since the formation of the society, have they been able to review their



past labours, or look upon the present situation and future prospects of the institution, with more unmixed satisfaction.

Since last report two schools have been added to our number.

Our schools, eight in number, and containing 863 scholars, are taught by 90 superintendents and teachers, who are members of the society, and 61, who are called volunteers, in consequence of not possessing membership with us. The quarterly reports bear ample testimony to the fidelity and zeal which they have, with few exceptions, exercised in the discharge of their school duties. We regret to say that the absent scholars have not been visited or sought after in the manner prescribed by our rules. As it is highly important, if not absolutely necessary, to success in our undertaking, that this part of our system should also be carried into effect, we take leave to state that the time of those who teach is so completely occupied throughout the week, and on the sabbath, as to leave them no leisure for this object; and we therefore appeal to those members of our church who profess to be friendly to the cause, yet not actively engaged in it, whether a portion of their time, on the sabbath, might not, pleasantly and profitably, be devoted to this branch of a work, which is, confessedly calculated to promote the glory of God, and meliorate the condition of the human family.

The moral and intellectual improvement of those committed to our care, although not so desirable, yet it is by no means discouraging. Our schools are generally well attended; so much so in the southern section of the city, as to render it necessary to enlarge the room of No. 6, adjoining Wesley Chapel, which has been done so as to admit 100 additional scholars.

As an evidence of economy in our disbursements, we would state, that the average annual cost of each scholar, under our care, 31½ cents, including repairs to rooms, rent, fuel, and stationary.

Our libraries have not increased either in number or extent, as rapidly as their importance merits; and we suggest to those, who have books to

spare, the propriety of rendering the Sunday school an instrument for their circulation. In the absence of correct moral and religious principles, nothing has a stronger tendency, than a taste for reading, to wean and preserve the minds of youth from idle and vicious habits. The books of the schools, not only serve the children who obtain them, but frequently circulate through the family with whom they dwell; and thus, in the hands of a gracious providence, may be made a blessing to numbers, who would otherwise pass their lives in ignorance.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA S. S. UNION.

The annual report of the above Union for 1826, appears in the last Charleston Observer. Only one half of the schools reported at the preceding anniversary, made their reports. The following recapitulation shows the numbers of teachers and scholars taught in those.

#### Recapitulation.

	Teach.	Schol.
1 Circular Church,	23	171
2 Trinity,	15	112
3 Baptist,	17	134
4 Second Presbyterian,	20	134
5 Lutheran,	17	142
7 First Presbyterian,	12	61
10 Third Presbyterian,	26	160
	<hr/> 130	<hr/> 914

There is much, say the Board, even in these few reports, to cheer the heart of every friend of Sabbath schools, and every lover of Zion.

On most of the schools, the dews of divine grace have descended. Some of our precious youth have been led to consecrate their lives to the service of God; others have left this world, rejoicing in hope of eternal glory; and we would fondly hope, many, many more, are training up for happiness and heaven.

## IRELAND.

Extracts from the Appendix to the Report of the  
Sunday School Society for Ireland.

*Carrickmacross, County of Monaghan.*

The habits and manners of all, in cleanliness and regularity, and in an observance of the sabbath, are, beyond comparison, greatly mended to what they were, though, as might be expected in such a mixed society, there are still some wayward children, who will require further time and attention before much improvement in them will be visible. Where this time twelve months, as I understand, scarcely a single young person was to be seen at church, there are now upwards of 100 children regular, many of them serious, attendants at the house of God; and if, as we are assured on the best authority, a child will not depart from the good way in which he has been brought up, may we not hope, with the divine blessing, that these habits will strengthen in after life, and bring forth much fruit to perfection.

*Elginnoch, County of Antrim.*

Never perhaps did sabbath teaching in a remote country place, and on a small scale, produce so much good as it has done, and is doing in Elginnoch. It is held on the very verge of a mountain, and at a great distance from any day school, where many of the inhabitants are poor, and some of the heads of families but poorly educated; yet even here it has excited such a thirst for education, that if during a storm in winter, the school should be for a day or two interrupted, the poor ragged little ones will be inquiring of the teachers when it will recommence. The advantage resulting from this school has been most manifest to the Rev. Mr.—, in his late parochial visitation, in which he found the children of the poorest families in Elginnoch anxious to be catechised, and often discovering more scriptural knowledge than children of the same age in better circumstances, but where there was no Sunday school.

The Elginnoch Sunday School has become ambulatory. There are six families who hold it in their kitchens

in rotation, and two of the teachers on each day stay at home from public worship that they may labour in the school.

## FRANCE.

God is greatly blessing the labours of his faithful servants on the continent of Europe; and very pleasing accounts of the increase of true religion are sent over to England. In France the gospel is spreading, and much good is doing in various ways. A young man, who was formerly a catechist for two years in a village at the foot of the mountains in Dauphine, is now a very zealous and useful minister. His flock are all shepherds; and out of ninety-five, who were under his teaching last spring, he had good reason to believe, that more than forty were deeply impressed with a serious concern for their souls. He has been much blest amongst the children: chiefly the little girls; of whom, he says, more than twenty make prayer a delightful and pleasant work. Going out one day, he saw an umbrella stuck in the ground; and being curious to see what was under it, he went and found four little girls on their knees praying. This person has lately been in England, when he read to a friend some letters he had received from his scholars since he left them. He much wishes to furnish his boys with the means of serving their Lord, either as school-masters or ministers: as many of them show good talents as well as piety. He has no other way of helping them forward, but by sharing his frugal means first at the house of one, and then of another: during which time he instructs them. He says no one can tell the good which might be done in France, if persons like himself, had the means of taking promising boys by the hand. He had conversed with several pastors, who are working in retired corners of the vineyard, and all think that in a very few years, at a small expense, a large number of most useful school-masters and ministers might thus be raised up.—*Phil. Rec.*



## POETRY.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

As teachers of the rising race,  
O Lord, we supplicate thy grace,  
Assured that all our toil is vain  
Unless we heavenly influence gain.

But if thy blessing thou impart,  
The shades of error will depart,  
As night's dark shadows flee away  
Before the glorious orb of day.

O may thy heavenly beams be felt,  
Causing the frozen heart to melt;  
And in the softened ground may we  
See the young germs of piety.

This is our hearts' desire—the end  
For which we labour, and attend  
With patient hope from year to year,  
Anxious to see the fruit appear.

Still may we wait with patience—still  
Pursue our work with cheerful will,  
And find in this our loved employ,  
An earnest of our future joy.

## THE INVOCATION.

By Mrs. Hemans.

Written after the Death of a Sister-in-law.

Answer me, burning stars of night!  
Where is the spirit gone,  
That past the reach of human sight  
Even as a breeze hath flown?  
—And the stars answered me—"We roll  
In light and power on high;  
But, of the never-dying soul,  
Ask things that cannot die!"

Oh! many-ton'd and chainless wind!  
Thou art a wanderer free;  
Tell me if thou its place canst find,  
Far over mount and sea?  
—And the wind murmur'd in reply,  
"The blue deep I have cross'd,  
And met its barks and billows high,  
But not what thou hast lost."

Ye clouds that gorgeously repose  
Around the setting sun,  
Answer! have ye a home for those,  
Whose earthly race is run?  
—The bright clouds answer'd—"We depart,  
We vanish from the sky;  
Ask what is deathless in thy heart  
For that which cannot die!"

Speak, thou voice of God within!  
Thou of the deep low tone!  
Answer me through life's restless din,  
Where is the spirit flown?  
—And the voice answer'd—"Be thou still!  
Enough to know is given;  
Clouds, winds, and stars, their task fulfil,  
Thine is to trust in heaven!"

## ANGEL'S SONG.

Thanks be to God, who giveth evermore  
The victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Such is the joyful anthem; but before  
Its full, triumphal echoes can be poured  
Through heaven's high courts, and God can be  
adored  
By thee in that beatitude, thou must  
Be born again; and then, by grace restored  
Unto his favour, even from the dust  
Thou shalt be raised again, to join the good and  
just.

## AUXILIARIES,

*Recognised at the stated meetings of  
the Board of Managers, January  
and February, 1827.*

Greencastle, Pa. Sunday School, Hon.  
David Fullerton, *President*. Rich-  
ard Sturgeon, *Vice President*. Ro-  
bert M'Lellan, *Secretary*.

Fayetteville, N. C. Presb. Sunday  
School, Hon. Henry Potter, *Pres.*  
Geo. M'Niell, *V. Pres.* August T.  
M'Neill, *Librarian*. W. White-  
head, *Treas.* Wm. E. Faroy, *Cor.*  
Sec. J. Williams, *Supt.* Elisha  
Stedman, John M'Rae, Jas. B. Fur-  
guson, Col. J. Black and Jno. D.  
Eccle, *Managers*.

Montgomery Co. Va. Sabbath School  
Union, Hamilton Wade, *Pres.* Jos.  
S. Edie, *V. Pres.* John Gardner,  
*Treas.* and *Cor. Sec.* Robert M.  
Craig, *Rec. Sec.* Wm. Eyle, John  
Snider, Abram Bayler, David Page,  
R. D. Montague, Robert Gardner,  
John Wade, Thos. Boger, Dr. A.  
Morrison, Jacob Clare, R. A. Smith,  
Capt. Hugh Gibson, Aziel Snow,  
Jacob Talls, James Anderson, Jas.  
Wade, Thos. C. Trigg, Jacob Cook,  
Wm. Wade, Wm. Woolwine, *Ma-  
nagers*.

Milton, Pa. Sunday School Union,  
Rev. George Junkin, *Cor. Sec.* Nor-  
thumberland, Co. Pa.

Savannah, Geo. Sabbath School So-  
ciety, L. Mason, *Superintendent*.

Kentuck, Pa. Sabbath School Society,  
Rev. David Plate, *Pres.* Rev. Jas.  
Russell, *V. Pres.* Charles Chand-  
ler, *Secr'y.* A. Teffany, *Treas.*  
Wm. Abel, Samuel Powers, Charles  
Chapman, *Managers*.

Zoar, Phila. Sabbath Coloured School  
Teachers' Association, Samuel R.  
Dunn, *Pres.* George Wilson *Treas.*  
George Harton, *Secr'y.*

Jamaica, L. I., N. Y. Sabbath School  
Society, Rev. E. W. Crane, *Pres.*  
Pierpont Potter, *Secr'y.* Dr. T. W.  
Blatchford, *Treas.*

**MONEYS** received by the American Sunday School Union, from the 20th of January, to the 20th of February, 1827.

**I. MINISTERS MEMBERS FOR LIFE,**

*By the payment of thirty dollars and upwards.*

- \*Rev. George Chandler, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Kensington, Philadelphia, by the members of his church, \$46
- \*Rev. Samuel S. Kennard, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Kensington, Philadelphia, by the members of the Wesleyan United Society of Kensington, 30
- \*Rev. John M'Dowell, D. D. Pastor of 1st Presb. Church, Elizabethtown, N. J. by the Superintendent and Teachers of the Sunday Schools of his church, 30

**II. OTHER MEMBERS FOR LIFE,**

*By the payment of thirty dollars and upwards.*

- Frederick W. Porter, by a number of Sunday School Teachers and other friends, \$40
- \*George Gilbert, 30
- Hugh De Haven, by the Female Sunday School Teachers of St. Andrew's Church, Philadelphia, 30

**\*III. ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS FOR THE YEAR 1827.**

*By the payment of three dollars and upwards.*

- Thos. Bird, \$3. Alexander Benson, 3.
- W. S. Crothers, 3. Mathew Carey, 3. Robert S. Clark, 5. Chas. Deal, 3. Jas. C. Donnell, 3. Dr.

Wm. Darrach, 3. Geo. Earp, 3. Geo. Emerick, 3. Margaret Dale, 3. D. S. Freeland, 3. Jas. Forten, 3. Henry Gibbs, 3. John Holmes, 3. Daniel Harrington, 3. Geo. Handy, 3. J. Haven, 3. John Harland, 3. P. E. Hamm, 3. Paul K. Hubbs, 3. W. B. Johnson, 3. L. Johnson, 3. Geo. K. Kuhn, 3. U. Kitchen, 3. N. Lloyd, 3. Samuel Lloyd, 3. John Owen, 3. Wm. Montgomery, 3. George W. McClelland, 3. Michael Nisbet, 3. Wm. Nassau, 3. Henry Pratt, 3. Robert Ralston, Jr. 3. Ann Saunders, 3. John Sailor, 3. Jesse Smith, 3. A. Symington, 3. Henry Toland, 3. Daniel Thatcher, 3. J. Wright, 3. David H. White, 3. John Ker, 3. D. Maccoun, (for 1826-7,) 6. John Ristine, 3. W. Hughes, 3. Earnest Kroll, 3. S. S. Association of 5th Presbyterian Church, by Charles Deal, 3. Jeremiah Turck, 3. John L. Grant, 3.

**IV. DONATIONS,**

*By the Rev. Howard Malcom, General Agent, the particulars to be given in a future number,* \$475 00

Total amount acknowledged in the above list, \$867 00

The amount of money received from auxiliary societies in remittances for books and donations to the Missionary Fund, are unavoidably deferred to our next number.

\* These sums were collected by Mr. A. W. Corey.

## Notices and Acknowledgments.

We are sorry that the second number of a "A Looker On," has not been furnished us for this month. The importance of the subject itself, and the able manner in which our correspondent is capable of writing it, have caused many to look for this article with considerable interest.

The communication of "A Superintendent," in answer to "A Looker On," is necessarily postponed until next month.